

## Office of Personnel Management

## § 890.1044

closes, the presiding official shall issue a written report of all findings of fact to the suspending official.

### **§ 890.1041 Deciding a contest after a fact-finding proceeding.**

(a) *Presiding official's findings shall be accepted.* The suspending official shall accept the presiding official's findings, unless they are arbitrary, capricious, or clearly erroneous.

(b) *Suspending official's decision.* Within 30 days after receiving the presiding official's report, the suspending official shall issue a final written decision that either sustains, modifies, or terminates the suspension. The suspending official may extend this period for good cause.

(c) *Effect on subsequent debarment or suspension proceedings.* A decision by the suspending official to modify or terminate a suspension shall not prevent OPM from subsequently debarring the same provider, or any other Federal agency from either suspending or debarring the provider, based on the same facts.

### EFFECT OF DEBARMENT

### **§ 890.1042 Effective dates of debarments.**

(a) *Minimum notice period.* A debarment shall take effect not sooner than 30 days after the date of OPM's notice of proposed debarment, unless the debarring official specifically determines that the health or safety of covered individuals or the integrity of the FEHBP warrants an earlier effective date. In such a situation, the notice shall specifically inform the provider that the debarring official decided to shorten or eliminate the 30-day notice period.

(b) *Uncontested debarments.* If a provider does not file a contest within the 30-day notice period, the proposed debarment shall take effect on the date stated in this notice of proposed debarment, without further procedures, actions, or notice by OPM.

(c) *Contested debarments and requests for reducing the period of debarment.* If a provider files a contest within the 30-day notice period, the proposed debarment shall not go into effect until the debarring official issues a final written decision, unless the health or safety of

covered individuals or the integrity of the FEHBP requires the debarment to be effective while the contest is pending.

### **§ 890.1043 Effect of debarment on a provider.**

(a) *FEHBP payments prohibited.* A debarred provider is not eligible to receive payment, directly or indirectly, from FEHBP funds for items or services furnished to a covered individual on or after the effective date of the debarment. Also, a provider shall not accept an assignment of a claim for items or services furnished to a covered individual during the period of debarment. These restrictions shall remain in effect until the provider is reinstated by OPM.

(b) *Governmentwide effect.* Debarment precludes a provider from participating in all other Federal agencies' procurement and nonprocurement programs and activities, as required by section 2455 of the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1994 (Pub. L. 103-355). Other agencies may grant a waiver or exception under their own regulations, to permit a provider to participate in their programs, notwithstanding the OPM debarment.

(c) *Civil or criminal liability.* A provider may be subject to civil monetary penalties under this subpart or criminal liability under other Federal statutes for knowingly filing claims, causing claims to be filed, or accepting payment from FEHBP carriers for items or services furnished to a covered individual during a period of debarment.

### NOTIFYING OUTSIDE PARTIES ABOUT DEBARMENT AND SUSPENSION ACTIONS

### **§ 890.1044 Entities notified of OPM-issued debarments and suspensions.**

When OPM debars or suspends a provider under this subpart, OPM shall notify:

(a) All FEHBP carriers;

(b) The General Services Administration, for publication in the comprehensive Governmentwide list of Federal agency exclusions;

(c) Other Federal agencies that administer health care or health benefits programs; and

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(d) State and local agencies, authorities, boards, or other organizations with health care licensing or certification responsibilities.

### **§ 890.1045 Informing persons covered by FEHBP about debarment or suspension of their provider.**

FEHBP carriers are required to notify covered individuals who have obtained items or services from a debarred or suspended provider within one year of the date of the debarment or suspension of:

(a) The existence of the provider's debarment or suspension;

(b) The minimum period remaining in the provider's period of debarment; and

(c) The requirement that OPM terminate the debarment or suspension before FEHBP funds can be paid for items or services the provider furnishes to covered individuals.

#### **EXCEPTIONS TO THE EFFECT OF DEBARMENTS**

### **§ 890.1046 Effect of debarment or suspension on payments for services furnished in emergency situations.**

A debarred or suspended health care provider may receive FEHBP funds paid for items or services furnished on an emergency basis if the FEHBP carrier serving the covered individual determines that:

(a) The provider's treatment was essential to the health and safety of the covered individual; and

(b) No other source of equivalent treatment was reasonably available.

[69 FR 9920, Mar. 3, 2004]

### **§ 890.1047 Special rules for institutional providers.**

(a) *Covered individual admitted before debarment or suspension.* If a covered person is admitted as an inpatient before the effective date of an institutional provider's debarment or suspension, that provider may continue to receive payment of FEHBP funds for inpatient institutional services until the covered person is released or transferred, unless the debarring or suspending official terminates payments under paragraph (b) of this section.

(b) *Health and safety of covered individuals.* If the debarring or suspending official determines that the health and safety of covered persons would be at risk if they remain in a debarred or suspended institution, OPM may terminate FEHBP payments at any time.

(c) *Notice of payment limitations.* If OPM limits any payment under paragraph (b) of this section, it must immediately send written notice of its action to the institutional provider.

(d) *Finality of debarring or suspending official's decision.* The debarring or suspending official's decision to limit or deny payments under paragraph (b) of this section is not subject to administrative review or reconsideration.

[69 FR 9920, Mar. 3, 2004]

### **§ 890.1048 Waiver of debarment for a provider that is the sole source of health care services in a community.**

(a) *Application required.* A provider may apply for a limited waiver of debarment at any time after receiving OPM's notice of proposed debarment. Suspended providers are not eligible to request a waiver of suspension.

(b) *Criteria for granting waiver.* To receive a waiver, a provider shall clearly demonstrate that:

(1) The provider is the *sole community provider* or the *sole source of essential specialized services in a community*;

(2) A limited waiver of debarment would be in the best interests of covered individuals in the defined service area;

(3) There are reasonable assurances that the actions which formed the basis for the debarment shall not recur; and

(4) There is no basis under this subpart for continuing the debarment.

(c) *Waiver applies only in the defined service area.* A limited waiver applies only to items or services provided within the defined service area where a provider is the *sole community provider* or *sole source of essential specialized services*.

(d) *Governmentwide effect continues.* A limited waiver applies only to a provider's FEHBP transactions. Even if OPM waives a debarment for FEHBP purposes, the governmentwide effect